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No. 105

RALEIGH, N. C.

MARCH 25, 1952

MARCH GENERAL FARM REPORT AND 1952 INTENTIONS TO PLANT

INCREASE IN PROSPECTIVE PLANTINGS

A slight decline in the acreage of spring sown crops in North Carolina is in prospect for 1952. The decrease in the total of 11 crops (including hay, but excluding cotton) for which prospective acreages are estimated is from 5,608,000 acres in 1951 to 5,548,000 acres this season. In terms of total planted acreage this decrease is offset to some extent by an increase in the acreage of winter wheat seeded last fall. Major decreases are in prospect for legume crops, (soybeans, cowpeas and peanuts) with smaller decreases reported for oats and hay crops.

The purpose of this report is to assist growers generally in making such further changes in their acreage plans as may appear desirable. The acreages actually planted in 1950 may turn out to be larger or smaller than indicated, by reason of weather conditions, price changes, labor supply, financial conditions, the agricultural program, and the effect of

(Continued on Page 2)

WHEAT ACREAGE UP SLIGHTLY

It is estimated that 427,000 acres of wheat have been planted in North Carolina for the 1952 crop. This estimate is based upon intentions reports received from farmers last fall. In comparison, 415,000 acres of wheat were planted for last year's crop of which 381,000 acres were harvested for grain.

Dry weather and hard soil conditions hampered and delayed the seeding of wheat in many areas of the State; however, it is felt that most growers were able to seed their intended acreage. Weather conditions since seeding time have been more of a normal nature and prospects for the crop as of March 1 were fairly good.

A forecast of production based upon the April 1 condition of the crop will be released about April 10. An estimate of the acreage to be harvested for grain will be available around May 10.

1952 INDICATED TOBACCO ACREAGE ONE PERCENT ABOVE LAST YEAR

On the basis of March 1 intention reports from growers, the 1952 North Carolina flue-cured tobacco crop is estimated at 742,000 acres. A crop of this size, if realized, would be 7,000 acres or about one percent above the 1951 flue-cured crop. The indicated 1952 crop is 16.0 percent larger than the 1950 crop of 640,000 acres.

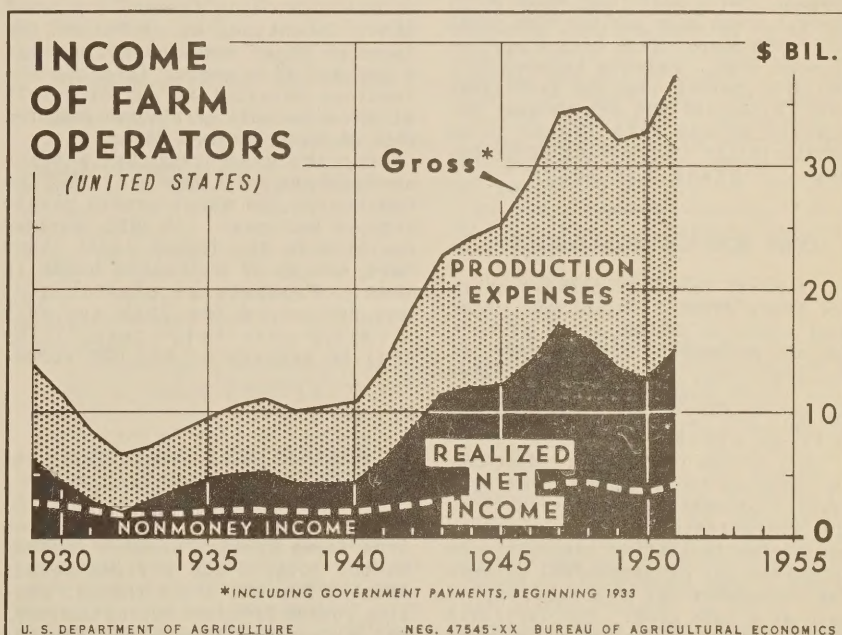
Type 11 (Old and Middle Belt) acreage for 1952 is estimated at 290,000 acres. This is one percent or 3,000 acres more than the 1951 acreage.

(Continued on Page 3)

FEBRUARY EGG OUTPUT UP

North Carolina farm flocks produced an estimated 123 million eggs during the month of February. The 9,120,000 layers in farm flocks produced an average of 1,346 eggs per 100 layers during the month.

The number of eggs produced during February is up 13 percent from the preceding month of January, although the number of layers in farm flocks decreased 3 percent. The higher rate of lay per 100 layers accounts for the increased egg production. Weather conditions during February were generally favorable for egg production.



U. S. farmers' gross income set a new high in 1951, but so did their production expenses-by a wider margin. Their realized net income of 14.9 billion dollars was 2 billion dollars, or 17 percent, above the postwar low of 1950, but 2 billion less than the postwar high of 1947.

This figure and the others shown in the chart represent income in current dollars. They do not measure purchasing power. With prices paid for items used in farm family living at an all-time high, the 1951 purchasing power of farmers' realized net income was lower than in any year from 1942 through 1948.

PROSPECTIVE PLANTINGS (Continued)

this report itself upon farmers' actions. Changes from intentions will be reflected in the July acreage report.

North Carolina farmers report intentions to decrease their acreage of soybeans alone for all purposes by 5 percent, cowpeas 11 percent, peanuts 12 percent, oats 2 percent and all hays 3 percent. Partially offsetting these decreases are reported intentions to increase the acreage of corn 1 percent, tobacco 1 percent, barley 15 percent, sorghums for all purposes 10 percent and sweetpotatoes 5 percent.

Spring activities have progressed on a near normal schedule. Delays have been occasional in some areas since March 1 by heavy rainfall. However, these rains, while causing some delay in spring preparations, have served to replenish soil moisture supplies which had been badly depleted by the extremely dry summer and fall of 1951.

Except for late sown fall oats, small grain crops were generally in fair to good condition as of March 1. Stands are not exceptionally good, but are adequate. As of March 1 tobacco plants were at about the normal stage of development for this time of year. Seed germination has been good. Some replanting has been necessary due to "washing" rains. However, "blue mold" has shown up in several areas much earlier than usual and "grub worms" have been a problem in some beds. Farmers express more and more concern over the tight farm labor situation and are in many instances giving this factor prime consideration in drafting their operation plans for 1952.

CORN ACREAGE UP SLIGHTLY

If North Carolina farmers carry out their March 1 intentions, they will plant 2,218,000 acres of corn for all purposes. This acreage, if realized, will be 1 percent greater than the 2,196,000 acres planted in 1951 (but 2.6 percent below the 1941-50 average.)

Most of the increase in plantings is expected to be made in the commercial producing eastern counties. The installation of more elevator and drying facilities together with increased use of mechanical pickers has increased the desirability of corn as a cash crop. The favorable prices growers received for corn last year has also been a strong factor in influencing farmers to shift from soybean to corn production.

Across the nation the 1952 planted acreage of corn is expected to be 83,928,000 acres. This is only slightly above the 1951 plantings of 83,866,000 acres.

IRISH POTATO ACREAGE UNCHANGED

March 1 reports from Tar Heel farmers indicate they intend to plant a total of 49,000 acres of Irish potatoes this year. This acreage is the same as that harvested in the State last year.

If reported intentions are carried out, the commercial early crop will total 18,500 acres -- the same as the acreage harvested last year.

Rotting of seed pieces was reported in some commercial areas where planting was under way before the heavy rains the last of February and first of March. Plantings in some areas have been delayed by excessive rains, but for the area as a whole, most of the commercial acreage is in the ground.

U. S. growers are expected to plant slightly less acreage to potatoes this year than was planted in 1951. Intentions to plant reports indicate prospective plantings of 1,373,000 acres in 1952, compared with last year's planted acreage of 1,379,000 acres and the 1941-50 average of 2,457,000 acres. Plantings now in prospect are smaller than for any year since 1867.

SWEET POTATO ACREAGE UP 5%

North Carolina farmers expressed their intentions as of March 1 to increase their sweet potato acreage 5 percent this year. If these intentions materialize approximately 42,000 acres will be planted compared with 40,000 acres last year.

For the U. S. reports indicate an increase of 5 percent over the abnormally low sweet potato plantings of last year. In 1951, acreage declined to the lowest level since this series of estimates began in 1868. Prospective plantings of 334,000 acres for 1952 are only slightly more than one-half the 1941-50 average of 632,000 acres.

FEBRUARY MILK PRODUCTION
6 PERCENT ABOVE A YEAR AGO

Production of milk on North Carolina farms during February (29 day month) totaled 129 million pounds about 2 percent below the 131 million pounds produced during January, but 6 percent larger than the 122 million pounds produced during February a year earlier. The 1941-50 average production for February is 102 million pounds. While the total output during February was less than total production for January the February average daily production was about 5 percent higher.

SOYBEAN AND COWPEA ACREAGE DOWN

The 1952 prospective acreage for soybeans grown alone for all purposes in North Carolina is 417,000 acres or 5 percent less than the 1951 plantings of 439,000 acres. Despite the indicated cut in plantings, the 1952 prospective acreage, if realized, will be the third largest of record being exceeded only in 1943 and 1951.

Most of the decrease in soybean acreage is expected to result from a shift to corn as a cash crop in the eastern commercial counties.

If farmers carry out their March intentions, a total of 40,000 acres of cowpeas will be planted in the Tar Heel state in 1952. This would mean a decrease of 11 percent from 1951 plantings. Acreage devoted to cowpeas in N. C. has been steadily decreasing for the past several years.

Across the Nation a record acreage of soybeans planted alone for all purposes is indicated for 1952. Growers' intentions as of March 1 point to 15.5 million acres compared with 14.8 million acres last year and the 10-year average of 12.8 million acres grown alone for all purposes.

TRUCK CROP PROSPECTS FAVORABLE

The present outlook for the strawberry crop is good. The light freeze accompanied by frost on the night of March 15 did very little, if any, damage as practically no blooms had opened. Fertilization and mulching have been delayed by heavy rains. Only about 40 percent of the crop had been mulched by mid-March.

Full bloom is expected about the first week of April. Activity of the red spider has been very light. With favorable weather conditions picking should begin around April 21, reaching volume around the first week of May.

The lettuce crop is in good condition and the stands are good. However, due to cool damp weather growth has been slow and the crop is about 2 weeks late. With favorable weather conditions, the harvest of the lettuce crop should begin the last week in April, reaching volume during the first week in May.

Transplanting of the cabbage crop has been completed. The stands are fair but the crop has made little progress due to the cold weather and excessive rain. In general the crop is about 2 weeks late. With favorable weather conditions from now on harvest should begin about the first of May.

No snap beans have been planted as yet but planting in some areas is expected to get under way as soon as weather permits, becoming general by April 1.

PROSPECTIVE PLANTING FOR 1952

CROPS	NORTH CAROLINA					UNIT OF YIELD	UNITED STATES				
	AVERAGE 1941-1950		ACREAGE PLANTED				AVERAGE 1941-1950		ACREAGE PLANTED		
	ACREAGE PLANTED	YIELD PER PLANTED ACRE	1951	INDICATED 1952	1952 % OF 1951		ACREAGE PLANTED	YIELD PER PLANTED ACRE	1951	INDICATED 1952	1952 % OF 1951
	(000)	UNITS	(000)	(000)	%		(000)	UNITS	(000)	(000)	%
CORN, ALL.....	2,278	26.2	2,196	2,218	101	Bu.	88,379	34.1	83,866	83,928	100.1
OATS.....	442	21.3	542	531	98	Bu.	43,968	29.8	41,594	42,818	102.9
BARLEY.....	48	19.9	41	47	115	Bu.	13,986	22.0	10,840	9,752	90.0
ALL HAY*.....	1,259	1.01	1,214	1,178	97	TON	74,536	1.36	74,718	75,380	100.9
SWEET POTATOES.....	65	106	40	42	105	Bu.	632.0	91.9	316.5	333.7	105.4
POTATOES.....	78	125	49	49	100	Bu.	2,456.8	177.0	1,378.7	1,373.4	99.6
TOBACCO*											
TYPE 11.....	252.3	1,049	287.0	290.0	101	LBS.	347.5	1,061	395.0	400.0	101
TYPE 12.....	316.8	1,159	356.0	360.0	101	LBS.	316.8	1,159	356.0	360.0	101
TYPE 13.....	76.2	1,137	92.0	92.0	100	LBS.	187.9	1,135	224.0	226.0	101
TYPE 31 (BURLEY)....	9.7	1,420	12.1	12.5	103	LBS.	429.8	1,154	455.6	469.3	103
ALL FLUE-CURED.....	645.3	1,113	735.0	742.0	101	LBS.	957.7	1,103	1,110.1	1,121.6	101
ALL TOBACCO.....	655.0	1,118	747.1	754.5	101	LBS.	1,630.1	1,124	1,782.3	1,803.7	101.2
SOYBEANS**.....	392	-	439	417	95	-	12,788	-	14,838	15,457	104.2
PEANUTS**.....	293	-	245	216	88	-	3,649	-	2,593	2,158	83.2
SORGHUMS, ALL PURPOSE	30	-	50	55	110	-	15,260	-	15,113	13,442	88.9

* Acreage harvested

** Grown alone for all purposes -- partly duplicated in hay acreage

* Acreage harvested

** Grown alone for all purposes -- partly duplicated in hay acreage

PROSPECTIVE HAY ACREAGE DOWN

An estimate based upon March 1 reports from farmers in North Carolina places the prospective all hay acreage at 1,178,000 for 1952. Should this acreage materialize it would be the second smallest since 1942 -- the harvested acreage in 1950 was only 1,173,000 acres. Last year's crop was harvested from 1,214,000 acres.

A prospective decline in legume crops, including peanuts, soybeans and cowpeas, accounts largely for the decrease in all hay acreage. Also, growers have indicated that their acreage of lespedeza for hay may show a decrease from last year.

BARLEY ACREAGE INCREASES

Based on reports from barley growers in the State, 47,000 acres of barley were planted for the current year. This is an increase of 6,000 acres over last season and can be attributed to the favorable showing of improved varieties last year. Barley in some instances is replacing other grains used for feed purposes.

SLIGHT DECREASE IN OATS ACREAGE

The total acreage of oats seeded in North Carolina for 1952 is estimated at 531,000 acres. This is 2 percent less than the 542,000 acres planted for all purposes a year earlier. The slight decrease in acreage can be attributed to a shift to other grain crops that can be used for feed. Oats are grown primarily for feed and not as a cash crop in North Carolina. Due to the upward trend in yields, less acreage is necessary to obtain the same production of previous years.

TOBACCO ACREAGE (Continued)

Growers in Type 12 (Eastern Bright Belt) have indicated they will plant 360,000 acres this year compared with 356,000 acres last year. The indicated Type 12 acreage is also one percent above the 1951 crop.

The acreage in Type 13 (Border or S. C. Belt) is estimated at 92,000 acres which is the same as the 1951 acreage.

Burley growers have indicated they plan to plant 12,500 acres this year. This is 400 acres or 3.0 percent above the 1951 crop.

SORGHUM ACREAGE INCREASES

North Carolina farmers report intentions to plant 55,000 acres of sorghum for all purposes this year. This is a 10 percent or 5,000-acre increase over last year's 50,000 harvested acres. Most of the increase in acreage this year is expected in Southern Piedmont areas where sorghum for grain has been expanding rather sharply during recent years.

N. C. MEAT PRODUCTION UP

Commercial meat production in North Carolina during January from specified livestock (see table page 4) totaled 19,435,000 pounds. This is 22 percent above the 15,884,000 pounds slaughtered during the preceding month and is about 6.5 percent above production during January 1951. The rise in total production over January of last year came about entirely as a result of a sharp increase in hogs slaughtered since all other slaughter reflected a decrease.

In the meantime, total meat production for the Nation during January of this year at 3,722,291,000 pounds was slightly lower than production during January 1951.

1952 PROSPECTIVE PEANUT ACREAGE
12 PERCENT BELOW 1951

The 1952 peanut (alone for all purposes) acreage is estimated at 216,000 acres. This estimate is based on March 1 intentions reports from growers. A 1952 peanut crop of 216,000 acres would be 12 percent below the 1950 and 1951 crops.

The 1952 acreage actually planted to peanuts may vary from March 1 intentions reports. In addition to the usual uncertainties of weather the supply of labor and other factors, there is some question as to whether growers will be permitted to plant peanuts for oil purposes. Legislation with respect to this question is now pending in Congress.

The North Carolina 1952 allotment for quota peanuts is 192,986 acres. Of the total allotment, Virginia type peanuts account for 17,577 acres and the basic allotment accounts for 175,429 acres.

BROILER PLACEMENTS UP

In the Central and Western North Carolina commercial broiler areas 4,195,000 baby chicks were placed with broiler producers during February 1952 by hatcheries and dealers serving these areas. This is 8 percent more than the 3,870,000 chicks placed with commercial producers in these areas during January.

Commercial hatcheries serving these areas set 6,828,000 eggs during February as compared with 5,679,000 set during January. A total of 5,012,000 chicks were hatched in February or 26 percent more than the 3,974,000 hatched during January.

Prices received by growers for broilers marketed during February at Central North Carolina Markets averaged 30¢ per pound (FOB Farm). This was 1¢ per pound above the average price for January.

FARM REPORT

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FARM REPORT

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FEBRUARY WEATHER SUMMARY

February of 1952 was an equable winter month in North Carolina, not noted for either mildness or severity. The chief feature on the weather map was the large number of storms that originated in the Gulf of Mexico or the Caribbean area, and moved near North Carolina on the way to the North Atlantic. None of these storms came near enough to cause destructive winds in the State, although the last one, which passed northeastward up the coast on the 27th, caused winds up to 50 miles per hour at Cape Hatteras. This storm and others of a similar nature kept heavy clouds over North Carolina on February 2-3, 14-16, and 23-26, but the remainder of the month was relatively sunny.

The first half of February was rather warm; warm enough, in fact, to bring the average temperature for the month up to about three degrees above the average of all past Februaries on record. There were no unusually hot days, however; in fact, no temperature records were broken during the month, either on the high or low side, at any place in the State where long records exist.

Rainfall during February averaged about the normal for the entire State, with the heaviest amounts falling on the Coastal Plain and the lightest on the northern Piedmont. Totals at reporting stations varied from two inches to a little over six. Each of the low pressure storms that originated in the Gulf and Caribbean areas during the month and moved northeastward past North Carolina dropped a fair amount of rain on the State. On an average, this amounted to an inch on the 3rd, another inch about the middle of the month, and two more inches on the 23rd through 26th. This last storm brought snowfall to the central sections, amounting to as much as six inches at places in the central Piedmont.

NORTH CAROLINA & UNITED STATES LIVESTOCK SLAUGHTER JAN. 1951-1952*

SPECIES	NORTH CAROLINA				UNITED STATES			
	NUMBER SLAUGHTERED		TOTAL LIVELWEIGHT		NUMBER SLAUGHTERED		TOTAL LIVELWEIGHT	
	1951	1952	1951	1952	1951	1952	1951	1952
	THOUS. HEAD		THOUS. POUNDS		THOUS. HEAD		THOUS. POUNDS	
CATTLE...	8.8	8.5	7,180	6,827	1,579.8	1,509.3	1,561,349	1,484,060
CALVES...	4.3	3.0	755	575	758.8	681.4	147,691	134,041
HOGS.....	46.0	56.0	10,311	12,027	7,884.4	8,277.2	1,930,478	1,989,823
SHEEP & LAMBS..	.1	.1	9	6	1,132.4	1,126.8	112,733	114,367

* Includes slaughter under Federal inspection and other wholesale and retail slaughter; excludes farm slaughter.

PRODUCTION OF WOOL INCREASES

Wool production in North Carolina in 1951 totalled 191,000 pounds, up 18 percent from 1950 production. The number of sheep shorn increased from 30,000 to 36,000 while the weight per fleece decreased from 5.4 pounds in 1950 to 5.3 pounds in 1951.

Cash receipts from sale of wool totalled \$202,000 compared to \$84,000 in 1950. Wool prices in 1951 averaged \$1.06 per pound, over twice as much as the average price of \$.51 per pound received by producers in 1950.

NORTH CAROLINA AND UNITED STATES

WOOL PRODUCTION - 1950-1951

YEAR	SHEEP SHORN No. 1/	WT. PER FLEECE	PRODUCTION THOUS. LBS.	PRICE PER LB.	CASH RECEIPTS THOUS. DOL.
	THOUS.	LBS.	THOUS. LBS.	CENTS	THOUS. DOL.
NORTH CAROLINA					
1950	30	5.4	162	.52	.84
1951	36	5.3	191	1.06	2.02
UNITED STATES					
1950	26,387	8.46	215,422	57.3	123,340
1951	27,357	8.24	225,545	99.5	224,515

1/ Includes sheep shorn in commercial feeding yards.

NORTH CAROLINA INCHES OF RAINFALL DURING FEBRUARY, 1952

